(b) and (c) Post harvest losses of perishable fruits and vegetables are reported to be 8-37% due to various factors such as season of harvest, harvesting methods, improper grading and packing, poor transport, improper storage and post-harvest diseases.

(d) The Government of India is improving cold storage/storage facilities for horticulture produce in order to reduce post harvest losses. National Horticulture Board provides financial assistance for construction/ expansion/modernization of cold storages and storages for horticulture produce through its "Capital Investment Subsidy Scheme". During 2001 -02, the Board has created additional cold storage capacity of 20.32 lakh MT against the target of 12.00 lakh MT. Further, in the current year, upto 28.6.2002, the Board has created cold storage capacity of 4.89 lakh MT.

National Horticulture Board also provides financial assistance under its scheme on "Development of Commercial Horticulture through Production and post-harvest management" for developing facilities such as cool chain infrastructure, refrigerated van etc.

Besides, National Horticulture Research and Development Foundation is also engaged in developing on- farm handling and storages facilities for Onion, Garlic and vegetables.

Import of improved variety seeds

†2493. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have to import seeds of improved variety in order to meet their shortage;

(b) if so, the total number of the varieties of seeds imported during the last three years and the amount spent year-wise on their import, separately; and

(c) the details of distribution of those seeds to various States/Union Territories?

THE MINISTER OF STATE INTHE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYANYADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.